



WHERE THE ART OF YESTERDAY ILLUMINES THE LIFE OF YOUTH



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**The  
Appalachian School**

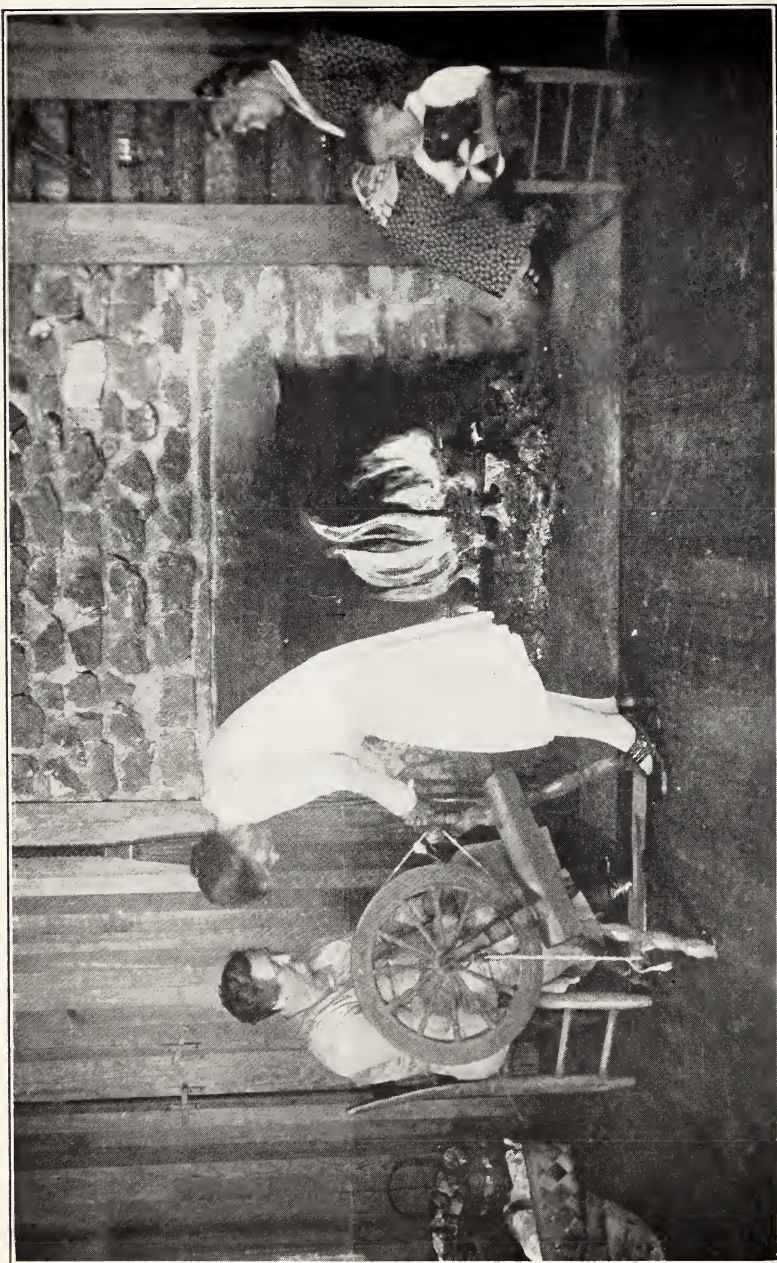
**Department of  
Fireside Industries**



**Penland, North Carolina**



BOBBIN WINDING



# **Appalachian School**

## **Department of Fireside Industries**

### **Penland, North Carolina**

LUCY C. MORGAN, *Director*

Do you believe in neighborliness and in co-operation?

Do you believe in Christian unity among a people innately religious?

Do you believe in reviving the standards and ideals of colonial days?

Do you believe in a people who to a keen native intelligence, strong in initiative and an inborn courtesy, gentleness, refinement, add the self-respect and independence of character that come from economic independence?

Visit Penland and you shall see these things come to pass. State highway number 19 brings you almost to our doors over what, five years ago, was a rock-strewn way often with mud hubdeep, taking a pair of mules the better part of a day to haul a wagon a half dozen miles.

Five years ago not a loom was in use. Aunt Cindy Norman's had been chopped up for kindling wood. Aunt Susan's was thrown out where the chickens could roost upon it. Many another was gone beyond remembering.

All these dear older people, some of whom are now, near their hundredth year, gathered to their forefathers, delighted to find that we were interested in the beautiful old coverlets that they had woven from wool off their own sheep, dyed with indigo of their own raising, perhaps before the war. There was always a sorrowful expression at the thought that the grandchildren knew only and cared for the store material.

Miss Amanda is still here, now 83 years of age, to tell of the "stints" for winter days and winter nights, the carding of the wool and the spinning of wool or flax of a night, together with the weaving of 3 to 5 yards of cloth of a day to outfit their family of seven for the year. In summer time the crops required the combined attention of all the family so that the weaving must be out of the way before spring work could be done.

Life in the old days was remote and isolated. A woman was kept closely at home by the numberless duties of house and garden,

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NOOK IN THE WEAVING ROOM

chickens, milking, washing by the side of spring or stream, bringing water or wood for preparing meals. Many a girl was married and passed into her new home, a cabin perhaps miles away in some forest clearing, with scarcely ever an opportunity to visit her mother again.

Our weaving enterprise was started just as an educational measure to give the rising generation knowledge of and respect for the art of their grandmothers. We began with one loom, then added another and another as good friends saw our need and came to our aid.

The second October of our weaving history a friend secured for us a booth at the state fair at Raleigh. Loom and boxes of woven articles were securely packed into the truck back of our Ford roadster and driven over the more than 300 miles to our capital city. That week's exhibition is a never to be forgotten experience. The streams of people who came to see that loom in operation! Many an aged person said, "I read about this and I came to the fair just to see this exhibit." The middle aged men and women told many a tale of how they used to assist their "mother" in her weaving, while the older women, with shining faces, told their stories and begged just to sit at the loom and weave a little.

For our own weavers the most important result of our Raleigh experience was that the interest of Mr. George Coggin, State Supervisor of Vocational Education, was enlisted, and ever since Mr. Coggin has been a most sympathetic and valued friend of this work.

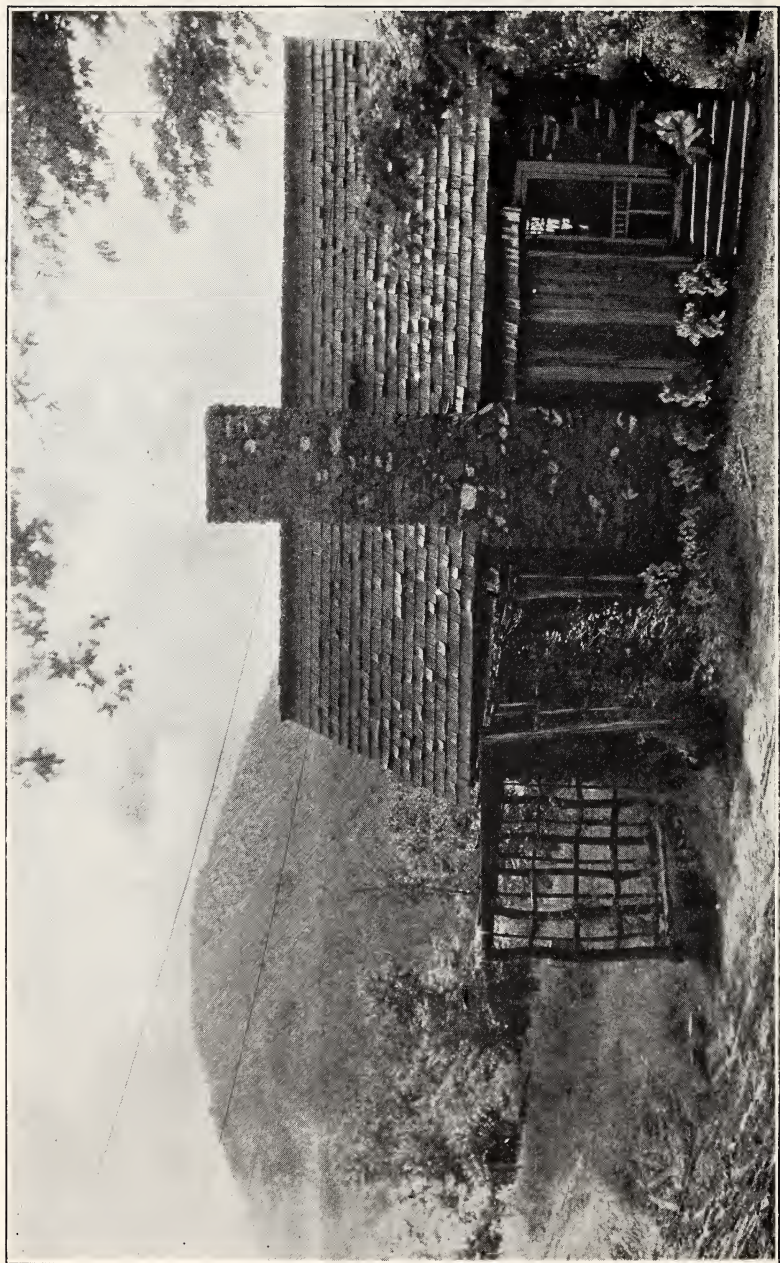
When the day came, due to the interest and assistance of our personal friends, that we were able to sell enough weaving so that seventeen women could have employment, we were thankful indeed. It was then decided to build, co-operatively, a community weaving cabin. That winter the menfolks got out the logs from their own forests and hauled them to a common spot on the school land. Early in May was their "log raising" when all the men met and put up the cabin, while the women prepared and served a dinner such as few groups could do. Mr. Coggin came from Raleigh for this occasion.

Wednesday is called "weaving day," because on that day the weavers come, some of them even from ten miles away, bringing their lunch, their finished work which may include some new design that one has herself worked out, and their babies, to the weaving cabin and spend the day. Here they receive instruction in new work or pick out old drafts; the new weaver learns to design patterns and to thread up a loom; all prepare the material for the special weaving which they are to do in their own homes.

This is a day to be looked forward to throughout the week. A large room flooded with sunlight, looking out upon the mystic blue of distant mountains, the green of forests, and the varied colors of flowers, while inside the cracking of reel or the click of shuttle or of

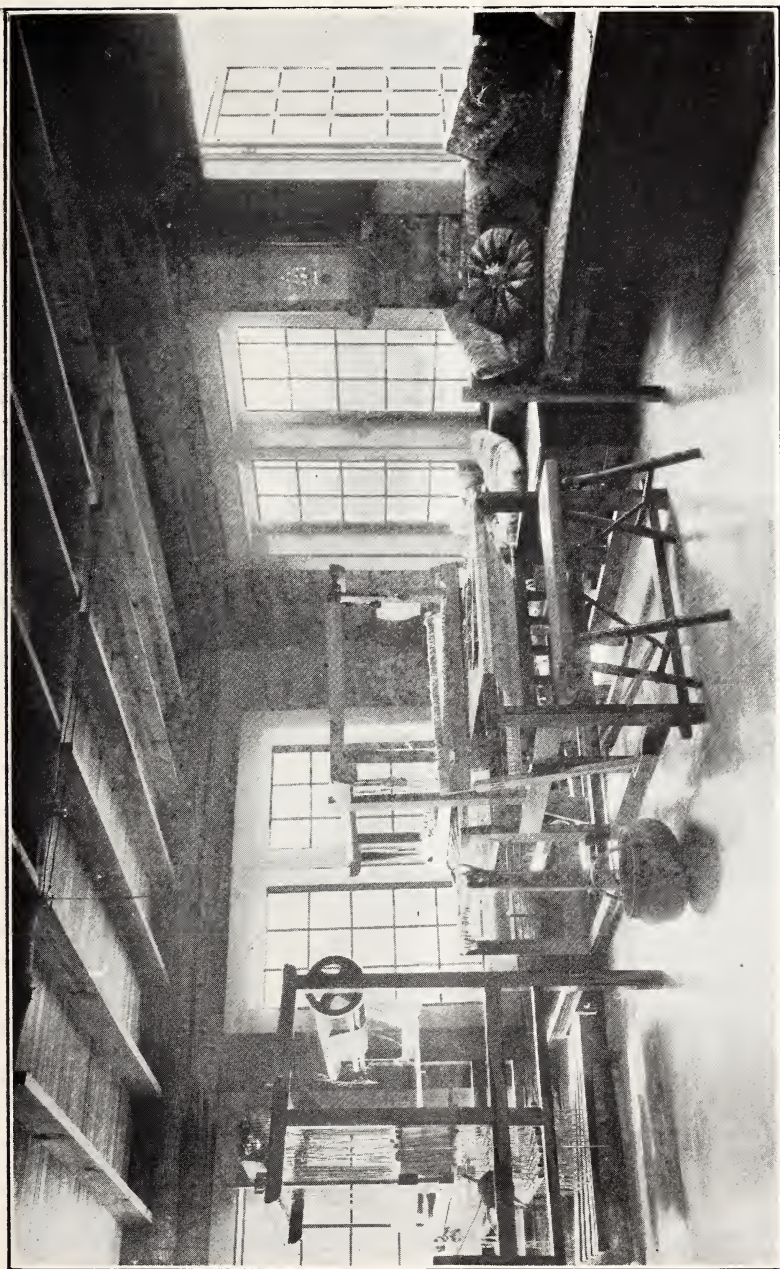


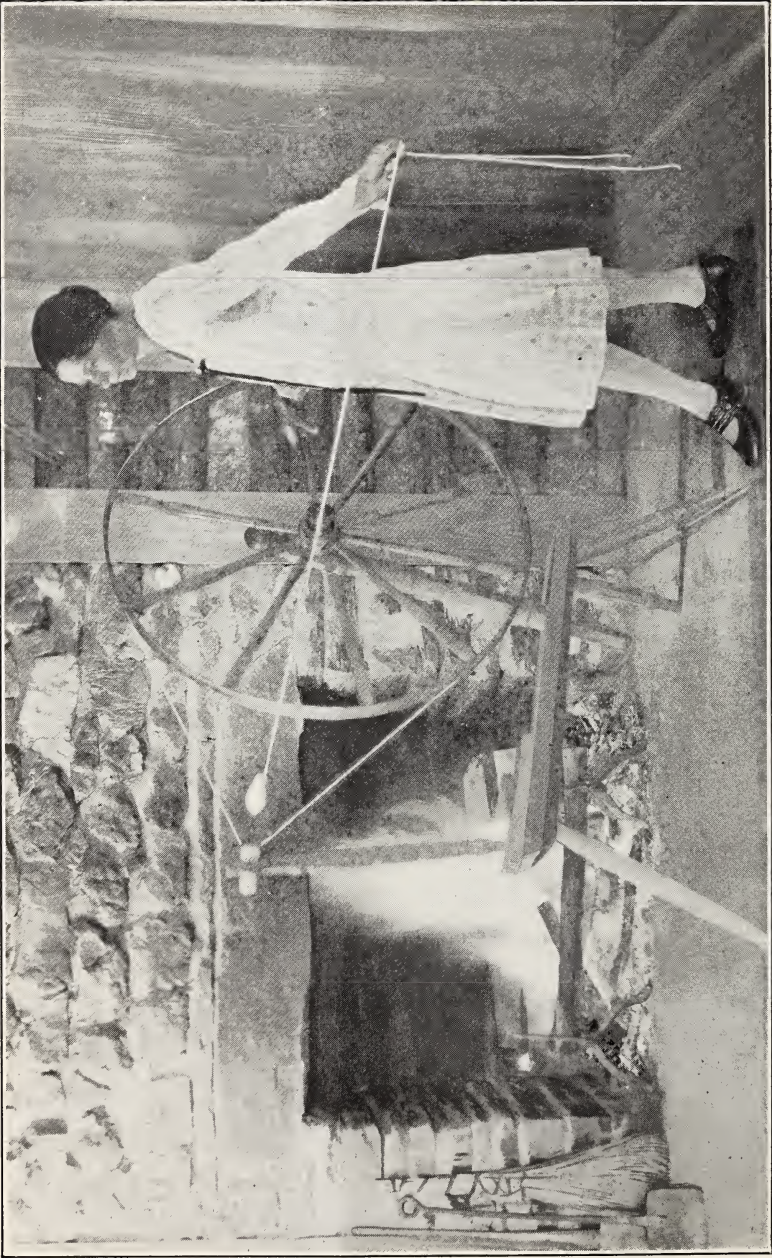
COMMUNITY WEAVING CABIN





INTERIOR COMMUNITY WEAVING CABIN





FIRESIDE SPINNING



treadles or the beating of loom, are eloquent of the art of long ago brought to life again by deft fingers in exquisite fabric. Here is a social gathering where ideas upon better ways of housekeeping and the care of children are exchanged. Matters ethical, moral, and religious, with all difference of church affiliation forgotten, are considered. Hymns are sung. Each weaver is ready to help her neighbor either at the community cabin or going to her own home, even though it be a matter of considerable time and labor. They are generous of themselves and of what is theirs in any good cause that presents itself.

At the end of Weaving Day they take their own special work to their farm homes where it is done on looms which they themselves have paid for. Here they can keep their children, rearing them in the faith of bygone days. Garden, chickens, and cow, pure water from mountain springs and the invigorating mountain air are a few of the ways in which these families are richer than the factory families in cities.

Every year has its Red Letter Wednesday when Mr. Coggin, or Mr. Worst of Chicago, or some other understanding friend spends the day with the weavers, giving aid and encouragement in the striving for ever better and better weaving.

The weavers make for themselves and for their daughters dresses and coats, some with the coverlet design in bands for trimming or in all over coverlet design.

There are sons and daughters of weavers' families who are making an enviable record in high school and in college.

At present there are over fifty women weaving from as many families and fifty more waiting until a wider market makes it possible to have work for them also. Nor is this the end. The weavers are very ambitious to have a road that shall lead into their territory so that a truck owned by the industry can haul the heavy loads of raw and made-up material that must now go by human backs if there is not a mule or a horse to be had.

The community weaving cabin must be enlarged because there is not room for all to work there.

These forward looking women also hope, after the road is an accomplished fact, to build a community laundry where an electric washing machine will do the work that they now bend over tubs by some mountain stream to do. This would add years to many a woman's life and efficiency.

The Penland weavers do not ask for gifts nor do they ask for charity. They ask for the chance to work that they and their children may have the opportunities and the independence that are necessary



NEIGHBORS



if one is to do one's share as an American citizen. The work, the standards, the ideals of the Penland weavers are worthy their Anglo-Saxon forbears. Their weaving is choice in design and in execution.

### DO YOU BELIEVE?

If you cannot come to Penland and see what has come to pass then write Miss Morgan for information or for samples of the weaving. Tell your friends about it and help to make a wider and a surer market. In this way may you have a share in the building of an ideal community.

AMY M. BURT.

*Illustrations by Courtesy of*  
MRS. BAYARD MORGAN WOOTTEN



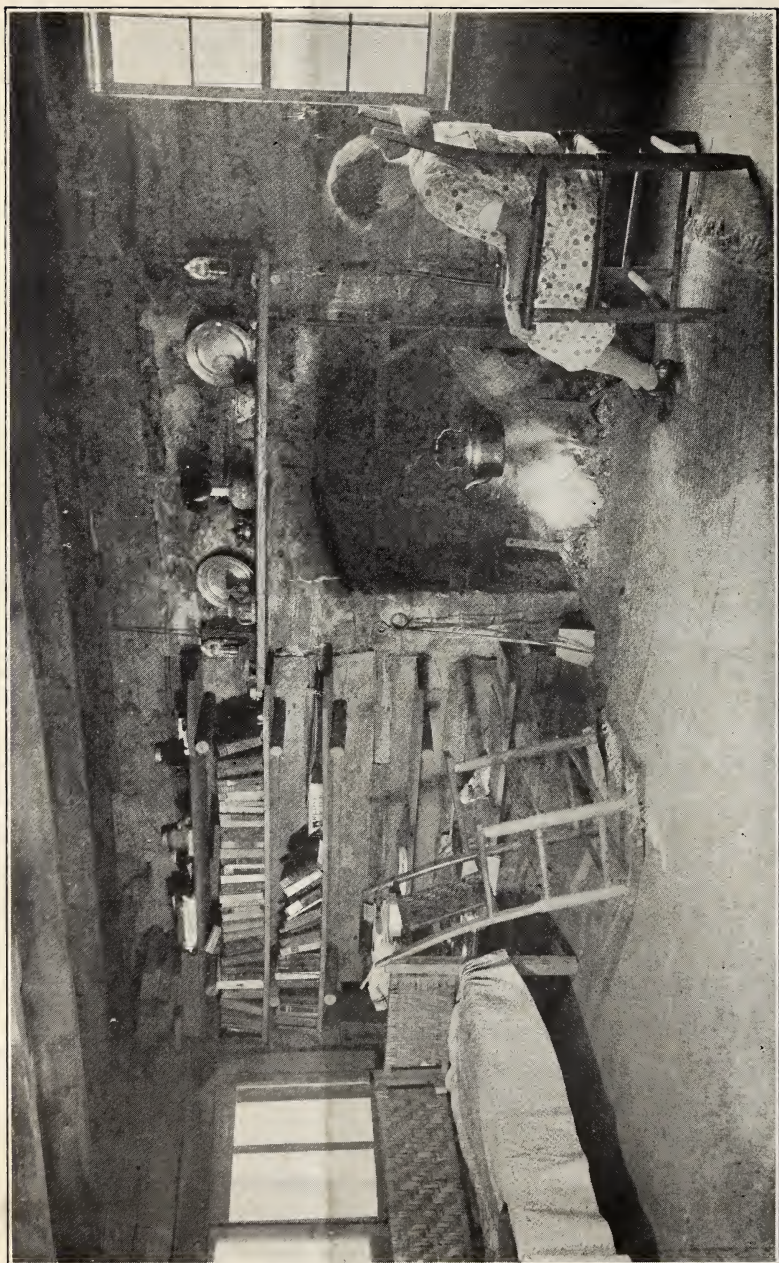


OLD "TIMEY" FLAX WHEEL



LOG RAISING





AT THE END OF THE DAY